

Steps in Iowa's identification process

Identifying students who need special education

General education interventions

If a student experiences difficulty progressing in the general education curriculum, the school district, in conjunction with the area education agency, attempts to resolve the problem or area of concern in the general education environment. These attempts are termed *general education interventions*. Interventions include:

- ✓ communication with parents
- ✓ teacher consultation with special education support and instructional personnel working collaboratively to improve the student's performance
- ✓ measurable, goal-directed, and documented attempts to resolve the area of concern
- ✓ collection of data related to the area of concern and to the intervention design and implementation
- ✓ systematic progress monitoring to measure the effects of interventions

Each school district provides general notice to parents on an annual basis about the provision of general education interventions that occur as part of the general program.

Resistance to interventions

If the problem or area of concern is resistant to general education interventions or if interventions are effective but require continued and substantial effort that may include the provision of special education services, the agency conducts a full and individual evaluation.

Full and individual evaluation

The purpose of a full and individual evaluation is twofold: 1) to determine interventions necessary to resolve the area of concern; and 2) to determine whether those interventions are special education. Written parental consent is obtained prior to the evaluation. The evaluation, conducted by a team of qualified individuals with input from parents, includes:

- ✓ a definition of the area of concern
- ✓ analysis of existing information about the individual, including the results of the general education interventions
- ✓ identification of the student's strengths relevant to the area of concern
- ✓ collection of additional information needed to design interventions intended to resolve the area of concern

Eligibility for special education services

After completion of the evaluation, the team may decide the student is eligible to receive special education services based on the student's disability and need. An IEP must be developed before the student is provided with special education services.



Iowa Department of Education
Bureau of Children, Family
and Community Services



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Together we can...



The expanded role of the general education teacher in special education services

Building a stronger partnership between general and special education in Iowa

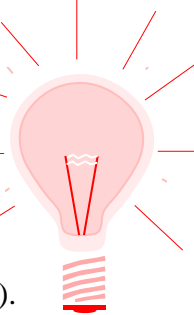
The 1997 law . . . it's a good "IDEA"

The 1997 reauthorization of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) brought significant changes to the way children and youth with special needs are educated. Among those changes is an increased emphasis on the role of the general education teacher and on the student's performance in the general education curriculum. The federal law codifies an Iowa philosophy which has supported general and special education collaboration for many years.

The increased IDEA emphasis on general education involvement is most evident in the requirements of the individualized education program (IEP). The IEP is a written document required for all children who receive special education services. As a result of the 1997 IDEA changes, the IEP document must include:

- ✓ a statement of how a disability affects a student's performance in the general education curriculum* and the support needed for the student to participate in general education
- ✓ if a student with a disability is not educated with nondisabled peers, an explanation of why the student cannot participate in the general education environment*
- ✓ parent participation in eligibility and placement decisions
- ✓ general education representation on the IEP team
- ✓ transition planning beginning at age 14
- ✓ decision-making regarding participation in districtwide and statewide assessments by students with disabilities
- ✓ a statement describing how student progress will be monitored and how that progress will be reported to parents as often as progress is reported for general education students

* It is important not to confuse the general education *curriculum* and the general education *environment*. Goals for most students with special needs seek for them to participate in the general education curriculum in a general education environment. However, it is possible for students to participate in the general education curriculum in a separate environment; likewise, they can participate in an individual curriculum in a general education environment. The person who typically brings the most knowledge about the general education curriculum *and* environment to an IEP meeting is the general education teacher.



IEP linkages to the general education curriculum and environment

Critical links to general education are reflected in the following IEP requirements:

- ✓ Present levels of educational performance which state how the student's disability affects involvement and progress in the general curriculum
- ✓ Annual goals, including objectives and/or milestones, related to helping the student be involved and progress in the general curriculum
- ✓ A statement of the special education and related services, supplementary aids and services, and program modifications or supports that will be provided for the student to:
 - advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals
 - be involved and progress in general curriculum and participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities
 - be educated and participate with disabled and nondisabled students
- ✓ An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the student will not participate in the general education environment

The role of the general education teacher on the IEP team

As a required participant on the IEP team, a general educator may help:

- ✓ develop, review and revise the IEP
- ✓ determine appropriate interventions and strategies for the student
- ✓ determine supplementary aids and services and program modifications for the student
- ✓ identify supports needed by school personnel to help the student progress in the general curriculum

